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## AN APPROXIMATION TO THE COMMUNICATIVE VALUES OF REVERSED-PSEUDO CLEFT SENTENCES IN ALAN PATON'S NOVELS

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The theoretical framework of this paper will be Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) because this linguistic school states that the way texts are constructed is determined by the functions that those texts have in society. We have to be conscious of the fact that the novels, as any other text can be a complex phenomenon: "To a grammarian, text is a rich, many-faceted phenomenon that 'means' in many different ways." (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004<sup>3</sup>: 3)

As Halliday declares in his *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, one of the purposes for which linguistics is useful is "to understand literary and poetic texts, and the nature of verbal art" (Halliday, 1994<sup>2</sup>: xxx).

Our hypothesis in this article is that the recurrent use of reversed-pseudo cleft sentences has certain communicative implications that will be the object of this study. Our corpus of examples belong to the three novels written by Alan Paton: *Cry, The Beloved Country* (1948), *Too Late The Phalarope* (1971) and *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* (1983).

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We find 69 examples of reversed-pseudo clefts distributed in the following way: 13 in *Too Late The Phalarope*, 38 in *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* and 18 in *Cry, The Beloved Country*. After each example we have included the year in which the novel the example belongs to was published and the page in which we find it.

With the analysis we intend to prove that the use of reversed-pseudo cleft sentences in the novels is a resource used by the author to highlight certain climatic moments and to build the context in which the novels are placed: the apartheid period in South Africa.

Paton, together with the rest of the authors that are against the apartheid, answered back to the attacks that freedom and dignity were suffering. These authors defended the interests of black population and attempted to make the white population restate the meaning of freedom, justice, truth and love through his novels.

Literature is a practice that is socially conditioned that is why we can state that the author shows certain ideological convictions, certain interests and he is impregnated of the community's characteristics because he lives inside the community. We can say that literature is a link between the situation that that community is living, the history that surrounds it and the rest of the world since it tries to transmit a message, to let us know the socio-political situation.

In the following sections we will concentrate on the formal and functional aspects of this structure to prove its communicative purpose in the novels that are under analysis.

## **2. HOW IS THE REVERSED-PSEUDO CLEFT SENTENCE BUILT?: DEFINITION AND FORMAL ASPECTS**

The reversed-pseudo cleft<sup>2</sup> is a SVO sentence in which we find a nominal relative clause as the subject complement and the emphasis is placed on the subject. The identifier normally has known information and appears in the theme, as we can see in this example of our corpus:

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<sup>2</sup> "Marked thematic equative" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004<sup>3</sup>: 70)

*He did not judge; that is why he said we were full of darkness, not deceit.* (1971: 57).

In thematic position, we normally find pronouns or demonstratives that make reference to something already said. In the rheme, we find *wh*- forms such as *what*, *why*, *where*, *how* and *when*. The most common ones are *what* and *why*.

In reversed-pseudo clefts, the pattern theme-rheme is not reversible, i.e., we can find:

- *That is what I think*, said my nephew. (1971: 81).

This is the way in which it appears in our corpus but it would also be possible to find the structure called pseudo-cleft sentences. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004<sup>3</sup>: 69) refer to this structure as “thematic equative” since theme and rheme appear as an equation.

This structure is also called “reverse *wh*-cleft” (Erdmann, 1986: 851). Thompson (2004<sup>2</sup>: 151), following Halliday and Matthiessen (2004<sup>3</sup>), refers to these structures as “marked thematic equatives”.

In this version of pseudo-cleft sentences, we can find the following *wh*- forms: *what*, *why*, *where*, *how* and *when*. The most common ones are *what* and *why*, as we will see with the analysis of our corpus of examples. Quirk *et al.* (1985: 1388) declare that “clauses with *who*, *where*, and *when* are sometimes acceptable but mainly when the *wh*-clause is subject complement”:

*Here is where the accident took place.*

*(In) Autumn is when the countryside is most beautiful.*

*(?) The police chief was who I meant.*

Apart from the *wh*- forms already mentioned, Erdmann (1990: 194) points out that the conjunction *because* can appear after the verb *be*:

*When we go from a very dimly lit room into bright daylight, at first we feel dazzled. This is because the retina requires a few seconds to become adapted to the daylight, and to react in its normal daylight fashion.*

We question Erdmann's statement, according to which apart from the *wh-* forms we have just mentioned we can also find the conjunction *because* after the verb *be* as we can see in these examples in which the resulting structure is not reversible.

- *I am getting mixed, Mrs M.K. That is because I am ashamed.* (1983: 17).
- [...] *That was because we felt we must defend our land.* (1983: 87).

Erdmann (1990: 195) declares that this construction is normally introduced by the demonstratives *this* or *that*, which normally have anaphoric reference, although we can also find nominal groups in this position. When *this* or *that* have anaphoric reference they show the hearer that they should refer to the immediate context.

Halliday (1967: 231-232) comments that demonstratives are not always anaphoric:

But demonstratives are not always anaphoric; they are reference items whose reference may be either situational or textual, and if textual may be either backward (anaphoric) or forward (cataphoric). It is their particular reference function that determines the information focus. Since what is referred to anaphorically is 'given', while what is referred to situationally or cataphorically is 'new', demonstratives are normally non focal when anaphoric and focal otherwise. Thus in // that's what I thought// *that* is anaphoric to the preceding text, whereas in // that's what I want// the focus shows that the *that* is referring to something in the situation, unless it is anaphoric but contrastive. This is a general feature of the demonstratives, not restricted to identifying clauses; compare // this would be the best plan//, referring back, with // this would be the best plan// which (again unless anaphoric but contrastive) is either cataphoric- the speaker is going on to expound the plan- or referring to an object, perhaps a set of drawings, that is under consideration.

Erdmann (1990: 195) offers the following examples with cataphoric reference; this kind of reference happens on rare occasions:

*“Look, this is what you do. You go through the front door, right, as if you’d got pukka business. Now, in the hall there’s two lifts.”*

*For that was what I believed the coming century would be: the realization, on the part of the whole world, of the hopes that I was entertaining for myself.*

The same author (1986: 853-854) declares that we can find as a focus of this construction a nominal group, adjectival complements, adverbs, clauses with non-finite verb forms, clauses with finite verb forms and the deictics *this* and *that*. After the analysis of our corpus of examples, we have observed the following:

In the majority of our examples we find *that*. Apart from *this* and *that* we can also find a nominal group at the beginning of the sentence, although this happens only in two examples of our corpus:

*Then I suddenly understood, and I laughed too, to think that Japie Grobler was what my brother had got for going all the way to Pretoria.* (1971: 49).

- *Quietness is what I desire.* (1988: 103).

In these examples, the theme has new information and it is emphatic.

In our corpus there are no examples in which the focus is an adjectival complement, an adverbial or clauses with non-finite or finite verb forms.

After *this* and *that* we find the copulative verb in present tense in the majority of our examples, since it expresses habitual facts and it appears in the past only in two examples:

*That was why my niece Henrietta did not marry Dick le Rous, who was a good but nervous boy; that was why she married her silent husband, because he never laughed at all, and one joke was the same to him as any other.* (1971: 155).

*That was what Huddleston really believed, that he had been sent to heal the broken-hearted.* (1983: 114).

Then we find the nominal relative clause that appears introduced by *what* and *why* in all the examples we have found, except in one example in which it is introduced by *how*. There are no examples of nominal relative clauses introduced by *where* and *when* in our corpus:

- *That's what I think, said my nephew.* (1971: 81).
- *This is what they do to their children.* (1983: 247).
- *Well, that 's how he was. He and I didn't talk much about these things. It's not my line of country. I try to treat a native decently, but he's not my food and drink.* (1988: 122).

*That is why many said that he would be the captain of the Springboks, because of the strange authority that he had over men.* (1971: 37).

- *That is my experience, he said. That is why I no longer go to the Church.* (1988: 35).

The verb in the nominal relative clause appears in present in the majority of our examples, although it is also in the past. In some examples of our corpus we find present perfect, present continuous, etc.

- *That's why I want no women and children nagging and screaming around the pan.* (1971: 102).
- *That is what beats me, Msimangu said.* (1988: 47).

*This is what she wrote, amongst other things.* (1971: 105).

*This is what has happened in this case.* (1983: 179).

In reversed pseudo-cleft sentences the highlighted element can have five different syntactic functions (Collins, 1991: 63): (a) direct object, (b) adjunct, (c) subject, (d) complement of preposition and (e) subject complement:

- a. *Like the Grecian urn and beauty, that was all we knew or needed to know about Russia* (LOB G22, 6-7).
- b. *And that is when it's going to be* (LL S.2.10, 203).
- c. *That's what is the female* (LL S.2.5, 431).
- d. *And that's all I'm interested in, said Mr Harvey helplessly* (LOB A07, 184).
- e. [...] *which is what I regard my late holiday as having been* (LL S.2.14, 98).

In our corpus the function of the direct object predominates:

- *That's what your cousin Abraham said, and went out working in the fields in the rain.* (1971: 88).
- [...] *That's what He has done for me.* (1983: 194).
- *It will come by a pipe from the river, said the young demonstrator. That is what the white man said.* (1988: 216).

It also fulfils the functions of subject and subject complement in some examples:

*That's what happens, Robert, you begin to trust nobody.* (1983: 70).

*Then I suddenly understood, and I laughed too, to think that Japie Grobler was what my brother had got for going all the way to Pretoria.* (1971: 49).

The elements that appear in the focus of this construction are (Erdmann, 1986: 853-854):

- A nominal group:

*“In my opinion a good swift kick is what he needs.”*

-Adjectival complements:

*... disgusting, but stuffed was what she felt...*<sup>3</sup>

- Adverbs:

*It had been decreed that here was where the digging for the bodies was to begin.*

- Sentences with non-finite verb forms:

*To gain autonomy for the enterprise is what, in substantial measure, the modern Communist theoretician calls reform.*

- Sentences with finite verb forms:

*You’re so smug, is what gets me. Don’t you ever think you’re going to have to pay a price?”*

- The deictics *this* and *that*:

*“The glory of having everybody at his mercy, that’s what excited him.”*

- Pronouns such as *which* or *it* used anaphorically (Erdmann, 1990: 194):

*He was touched, and ashamed, by what she had said; and that he could not show either sentiment was what made him silent.*

*“They’ll get me in the end, I expect. But probably not in the middle of the evening like eight o’clock, which is when I intend to be on my way.”.*

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<sup>3</sup> This example is an attributive or ascriptive pseudo-cleft, presented by Higgins (1979).



### 3. HOW IS THE REVERSED-PSEUDO CLEFT USED IN CONTEXT?: FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS

Collins (1991: 210-211) declares that the main function of cleft sentences and pseudo-clefts is thematic: these structures allow to group the elements of the sentence in two parts in different ways. These sentences have developed as a resource of the English language depending on the communicative needs of the speakers: according to the need of selecting in a moment of discourse a linguistic form that is appropriate depending on the information that the hearer already knows or according to the needs to select a form that highlights certain parts of discourse or establishes a contrast in an appropriate way.

Reversed pseudo-clefts and pseudo-clefts are constructions that concentrate on elements known by the writer and reader. They function as thematizers, but the writer chooses one or another depending if he wants to refer to something mentioned in the previous context (reversed pseudo-clefts) or prepares the reader to something that is going to be mentioned in the discourse and that, although it does not appear in the previous context, it is reasonable for the reader. (op. cit.: 210-211)

Reversed pseudo-clefts are thematically non-marked, since the theme is the subject, which is normal in declarative statements. In these sentences it is the identifier that tends to be thematic and receives emphasis instead of the identified. Therefore the identified is rhematic.

In contrast with the highlighted element of pseudo-clefts, which normally has new information, in reversed pseudo-clefts, it normally has known information, as we can observe in: *I've had enough time now to choose the ring I'd like - That is the one I want* (Collins, 1991: 140). But this is not always true as we can observe in the following example: *A good rest is what you need more* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 1388). The highlighted element is more appropriate in the theme and can be glossed as “what I have been talking about until now, namely x, y, z ...” (Collins, 1991: 151).

Since the relative clause of reversed pseudo-clefts belongs to the rheme, it is more probable that it has new information than pseudo-clefts, in which the relative clause belongs to the theme.

In this structure, elements with a greater semantic load appear at the end of the structure, in such a way that new information, which normally coincides with the

rheme, appears at the end. We can also say that this structure contributes to cohesion in texts since the demonstrative has anaphoric reference and we find together ideas that are connected. Reversed-pseudo clefts also contribute to the functional perspective of the sentence since communicative dynamism grows in the structure.

The majority of the examples of reversed-pseudo clefts in our corpus are in dialogues. From the previous statement we can deduce that this type of construction is very much used in spoken language.

### 3.1 THE STRUCTURAL COMPONENT: THEME AND RHEME AND KNOWN AND NEW INFORMATION

These structures are normally introduced by a demonstrative that makes reference to something previously said, that is the reason why we can say that the theme has very little new information, although it is emphatic, which makes of reversed-pseudo clefts an appropriate structure for informal situations.

As we already said in section two, these sentences are normally introduced by the demonstratives *this* and *that* with anaphoric reference. From this we can conclude that theme is an expression with very low communicative dynamism, since it hardly offers any information to the hearer because it makes reference to something said before. The rheme, however, offers a high level of communicative dynamism since it is the part of the sentence in which we find new information, in such a way that the principles of end-focus and end-weight are clearly accomplished.

The previous example would be analysed in the following way:

[...] *that*                      *is*                      *what a sound can do to you.* (1971: 40).

Theme	Transition	Rheme
Low degree of CD		High degree of CD
		“End-focus” and “end-weight”

In several examples we find *this* and in them we can see a higher implication from the author, more interest in the message he is transmitting, since this is a demonstrative that shows certain proximity:

*Japie's face fell at once, and from joking he was serious, because this is what rugby can do to a man. (1971: 76).*

- *Thinking. Not brooding, thinking. And reading. This is what I have been reading. (1988: 135).*

On the contrary, when we find *that*, the author seems not to imply himself so much in the message he is transmitting because he presents it with more distance through a demonstrative that indicates certain distance:

*That was why my niece Henrietta did not marry Dick le Rous, who was a good but nervous boy; [...] (1971: 155).*

*That's why the All Blacks leave the Maoris at home when they come to play the Springboks. (1983: 74).*

In the following example we can observe how the theme contains known information and there is new information in the rheme:

- *Then I think, Mr Kumalo, that you should go away from Ndotsheni.*  
- *Yes, that is what would be said, it is said now. Yes, that is what I have feared. (1988: 221).*

The rheme has new information in the examples of our corpus we present in the following lines; the next one is pronounced by the narrator in the novel *Too Late The Phalarope* (1971):

*He did not judge, he said; that is why he said we were full of darkness, not deceit. (1971: 57).*

In the example on page 216, the new information of the sentence is the statement made by a white man:

- *But where is the water to come from?*
- *It will come by a pipe from the river, said the young demonstrator. That is what the white man said. (1988: 216).*

Another example in which we obtain new information is the following one since we are informed of what Emmanuel Nene's wife used to say to his husband:

- *You are a wonderful chap. [...]*
- *That's what my wife used to say, Robert, when we were first married. (1983: 258).*

In the two examples in which we find a nominal group at the beginning of the sentence, the theme contains new information:

*Then I suddenly understood, and I laughed too, to think that Japie Grobler was what my brother had got for going all the way to Pretoria. (1971: 49).*

- *Quietness is what I desire. (1988: 103).*

*This* and *that* have anaphoric reference in the majority of the examples, that is why they have known information, as we can see in the example that follows:

- *This phalarope that no one has ever seen, is clearly a very shy bird, he said. That's why I want no women and children nagging and screaming around the pan. (1971: 102).*

*Ah, but your land is beautiful. That's what they say, the visitors, the Scandinavians, and the Germans and the British and the Americans. (1983: 35).*

- *You mustn't think that only black people feel that. I feel it too, very strongly. Apartheid is driving us apart. That's what it's meant to do, isn't it?* (1983: 62-63).

*Men come, and machines come, and they start building rough houses for us. That Dubula is a clever man, this is what he said they would do.* (1988: 54).

*A new heaven and a new earth, that's what it is.* (1988: 127).

- *No, I cannot afford it. It's a loaf of bread less every day. That is what we eat, mister.* (1988: 170).

In our corpus of examples we also find some examples in which *that* has cataphoric reference:

*Yes, that is what they did, asked questions that grew harder and harder, leading you to a place where you could not scape.* (1971: 53-54).

*That's what living is, she explained to us all, all wills together, and each takes a turn to yield.* (1971: 60).

*That was what Huddleston really believed, that he had been sent to heal the broken-hearted.* (1983: 114).

*That is what pleased her most of all, the sound of water falling, and of cows lowing, and the tapping of the bokmakierie on her window.* (1983: 217).

- *That is why he says to you, It is as my father wishes, and Yes that is, and I do not know.* (1988: 97).

It is important to point out that in the fourth part of *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* (1983) we find several examples of reversed-pseudo clefts pronounced by characters that are talking in informal situations.

The examples under analysis are pronounced by different characters in the three novels although in *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* (1983) we find many examples pronounced by the narrator.

### 3.2 ACCUMULATION OF EXAMPLES ON THE SAME PAGE

In this section we are going to comment on several paragraphs in which we find consecutive examples of reversed-pseudo clefts in the same page as it happens in the following example of the novel *Too Late the Phalarophe*:

*Japie's face fell at once, and from joking he was serious, because this is what rugby can do to a man. [...]*

*Ag, he could say things like that, that is why you forgave him for being a clown. (1971: 76).*

The previous example points out the attitude of Japie in a meeting in which he makes jokes with the family. In the following examples pronounced by the narrator, he lets us know the reasons why one of his nieces married her husband:

*That was why my niece Henrietta did not marry Dick le Roux who was a good but nervous boy; that was why she married her silent husband, because he never laughed at all, and one joke was the same to him as any other. (1971: 155).*

On page 26 in *Ah But Your Land Is Beautiful*, we find two examples of reversed-pseudo clefts in the conversation between Mr. Mainwaring, the director of education, and Dr. Monty on The Defiance Campaign and how surprising it is for them that Prem Bodasingh has joined this movement:

- *The Natal Executive Committee would have to find a new director, and I don't think they would be willing to go as far as that. That's not what worries me, doctor. It's the possibility that the Defiance Campaign may go on for many years. [...]*

- [...] *And I certainly never expected that one of M.K. Bodasingh's family would join us. Now when a young girl like that, clever and beautiful, decides that this is what she wants to do, that this is the right thing for her to do, who am I to stop her?* (1983: 26).

In the two examples pronounced by Emmanuel Nene we can observe the racial segregation that characterizes the place:

- *Now you know that rugby and cricket are the white man's religion, and it is a terrible thing when you find out that a man who is good in your religion is against the colour bar. Because rugby and cricket and the colour bar are really the same thing. That's why All Blacks leave the Maoris at home when they come to play the Springboks. That's why no black man has ever been allowed into a white cricket club, and no black man has ever become a Springbok. Am I right?* (1983: 74).

In the following example of page 25 of the novel *Cry, The Beloved Country*, Msimangu points out in the first example one of the thoughts of John Kumalo; in the second example he points out the reasons why white people are attacked by the native population. Both examples are important because they highlight two important realities: the thoughts of a character and the bad situation of the place. Apart from that we find a cleft sentence that points out the responsibility that the white man has to do good or bad things:

*Msimangu paused. I hope I shall not hurt you further. Your brother has no use for the Church any more. He says that what God has done to South Africa, man must do. That is what he says. [...]*

- *It was a white man who brought my father out of darkness. [...] The white man has broken the tribe. And it is my belief – and again I ask your pardon – that it cannot be mended again. But the house that is broken, and the man that falls apart when the house is broken, these are the tragic things. That is why children break the law, and old white people are robbed and beaten.* (1988: 25).

In the following example, the author wants to highlight the feeling of surprise and fear that Stephen Kumalo feels when the bishop recommends to him that he should leave the place with the repetition of this structure:

*Yes, that is what would be said, it is said now. Yes, that is what I have feared.*  
(1988: 221).

In several occasions, we find in the same page a reversed-pseudo cleft sentence and a cleft sentence:

On page 40 of *Too Late the Phalarope* (1971), both examples are pronounced by the narrator:

*[...] and he said in an ordinary voice, as if to sum it all up and wipe it all out together, as though it were really something of no real account, that's what a sound can do to you.*

- *I had a sound too, said the young constable.*

*His face and voice were eager, so the lieutenant had to overcome his constraint, seeing it was he himself who had made the young man eager.* (1971: 40).

In a similar way, the examples of cleft sentence and reversed-pseudo cleft that we find on page 126 of *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* highlight the unrest caused by the social situation:

*[...], but that is what the white Congress wants, for us to agree to attend this great gathering of the people, and then for us to chicken out.* (1983: 126).

*[...], and it is the points of disagreement that are the most fundamental. They are in fact the way that liberals look at the world.* (1983: 126).

In one of the letters that Van Onselen writes to his aunt, he uses the cleft sentence and the reversed-pseudo cleft in the same page to highlight the political figure



of Dr. Hendrik and to make clear that he does not belong to the political organization called *Broederbond*.

*He may not be the Prime Minister, but it is he who is at the helm of the ship of State. [...]*

*The Prime Minister, my own Minister, and Dr Hendrik are all Broeders. I was never asked to become one, and that is why I am now junior to a man ten years younger than myself. (1983: 57).*

The examples of page 194 point out the feeling with which one of the characters ask for help to another one because his son is under arrest. In the same way, it expresses how that character feels the protection of God in difficult moments.

- *The others will do the same, Gabriel. All my husband's family. And I have no family of my own. That's why I am asking your help. Can you find out when the case is to be?*
- *I'll do that, mevrou. The case will no doubt be adjourned, and they will let your son come home.*
- *That's why I need your help, Gabriel. [...]*
- *This day has been a day of grief for me. But sometimes God sends an angel in the hour of one's need. That's what He has done for me. May I tell you something? (1983: 194).*

On page 217 of this novel we find a cleft sentence and a reversed-pseudo cleft. The first one points out the figure of Dr. Hendrik and the second one what Mrs. Fischer liked:

*I could not say to him that it is only Dr Hendrik who can convince me that there is only one side to a question. [...]*

*That is what pleased her most of all, the sound of water falling, and of cows lowing, and the tapping of the bokmakierie on her window. (1983: 217).*

The following two examples appear on page 35 of *Cry, The Beloved Country* and they express in a very clear way the negative opinion that John Kumalo has regarding the attitude of the white man and of the church:

*It is the white man's shares that will rise, you will read it in all the papers.*  
(1988: 35).

- *That is my experience. That is why I no longer go to the Church.*  
(1988: 35).

On page 88 of *Cry, The Beloved Country* we find these structures in two statements pronounced by Absalom Kumalo. In the first one, he admits that what his father says is true and in the second one he recognizes himself as guilty of the murder of Arthur Jarvis with a cleft sentence:

*My father, it is what my father says, he answers. [...]*

- *Yes, I told them. They came with me, but it was I who shot the white man.*  
(1988: 88).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

We have considered the role of cleft sentences in the novels under analysis taking into consideration their function in building meaning in the novels. SFL has been our theoretical framework because this linguistic school establishes a clear link between lexico-grammatical choices in the text and the relevant contextual factors surrounding it. This linguistic framework highlights that the way texts are constructed is determined by the functions that those text have in society.

The analysis of the corpus of examples has proved that reversed-pseudo clefts add vividness to the narration since they make reference to information previously mentioned. Since this syntactic structure is not very often used in written language, we have observed that the majority of our examples appear in dialogues or in informal situations.

With the analysis of our corpus we have made clear that the theme of the reversed-pseudo cleft sentence is normally a demonstrative pronoun with the function of direct object in the majority of the examples, while the rheme is always the nominal relative clause functioning as subject complement. This demonstrative is not the focus of the information, which appears on the identified element, introduced by *wh*-. The *wh*-element appears always at the end of the structure, in such a way that the principles of end-focus and end-weight are accomplished.

*This* and *that* indicate to the reader that he has to concentrate his/her attention in the previous context. Halliday (1967: 233) presents the difference between both demonstratives based on the system of proximity near/far', 'near' being speaker-oriented [...], present or future time and cataphoric, while 'far' is not speaker-oriented, past time and anaphoric [...].

Reversed-pseudo clefts add vividness to the narration since they make reference to information previously mentioned. In addition, vividness is intensified by the use of present tense verbs to refer to habitual events or to momentary actions.

As we have pointed out before, reversed-pseudo clefts are used mainly in dialogues or in informal situations. In our corpus, this type of constructions appear in almost all the examples introduced but the demonstratives *this* and *that* and that is the reason why they depend on the immediate context and have known information; on the contrary, the rheme has new information. When we find these constructions, we can see that the sequence theme-rheme is reversible.

After the analysis of the corpus of examples we have come to the conclusion that the main difference between the use of *this* and *that* is determined by the grade of implication of the author: *this* is used to communicate that the author is very much interested in the topic, whereas when he uses *that* his interest in the topic is not so clear.

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